

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-5, 7-15, and 17 are pending in the present application, with Claims 1, 10, and 17 being independent.

Claims 1, 10, and 17 have been amended. No new matter is believed to have been added.

The Office Action states that the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed February 17, 2000, did not comply with the rules because it did not include cited applications. Applicants would like to note that the final rule implementing the requirement that an IDS include a legible copy of each cited pending U.S. application was not effective until September 8, 2000, after the subject IDS was filed. Accordingly, a copy of the cited applications was not required. Nevertheless, for the Examiner's convenience, submitted herewith are copies of the cited applications. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider the information cited in the IDS of February 17, 2000.

Claims 1, 4, 7-10, 13-15, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,870,717 (Wiecha) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,694,551 (Doyle, et al.). Claims 2, 3, 11, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiecha and Doyle, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,500,513 (Langhans, et al.). Claims 2-5, 12, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiecha and Doyle, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,970,475 (Barnes, et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As recited in independent Claim 1, as amended, the present invention relates to a purchase request approving apparatus capable of approving a purchase request of a desired article. (Independent Claims 10 and 17 respectively recite a method and a medium each having features that generally correspond to the features recited in Claim 1.)

According to the invention, display means displays information associated with articles for which approval of purchase is requested. The information is stored in a database in advance and displayed in a list window capable of displaying the articles as a list. Selecting means can select a desired article, in accordance with a user's operation, from the articles displayed in the list window.

Display control means controls appearance of an approval window having an approval button to perform approval of the selected article, and a rejection window having a reject button to perform rejection of the selected article, the approval window and the rejection window being different from each other and each window being displayed at a time different than the time the other window is displayed.

Input means inputs information representing approval of purchase of a subject article selected in the approval window; and when information representing approval of purchases of the selected subject article is input, purchase approving means stores the inputted information in the database and deletes displayed items associated with the approved article from the displayed items associated with the articles displayed by the display means.

In the present invention, the approval window is different from the rejection window, and each window is displayed at a time different than the time the other

window is displayed by the display control means, support for which means may be found, for example, at least from page 51, line 20, to page 53, line 15, of the specification.

Without the display control means of the invention, a problem would occur, for example, if an operator, using input means, mistakenly approved a selected article that s/he actually wanted to reject. Purchase approving means would delete the article against the operator's wishes, and the approval mistake could not be corrected. It is submitted that this problem is not solved by, for example, the cited references or any combination thereof.

The invention, however, is able to solve the above problem with the display control means. In particular, since the display control means displays the rejection window when the approval window is not displayed, the operator can reject the selected article without mistake.

The primary citation to Wiecha relates to a system for ordering items over a computer network using an electronic catalog. Applicants respectfully submit that, while the patent may disclose that a line item can be deleted once an order has been placed, it does not teach or suggest at least the feature of the present invention that the display control means controls appearance of an approval window having an approval button to perform approval of a selected article, and a rejection window having a reject button to perform rejection of the selected article, the approval window and the rejection window being different from each other and each window being displayed at a time different than the time the other window is displayed.

Further, Applicants submit that none of the secondary or tertiary citations to Doyle, et al., Langhans, et al., and Barnes, et al. remedies the above-discussed

deficiency of Wiecha. Therefore, even supposing that it were proper to combine the cited references in the ways proposed in the Office Action, Applicants submit that none of the proposed combinations teaches or suggests the display control means of the invention as recited.

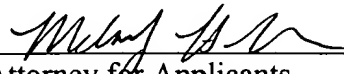
Accordingly, it is submitted that Claims 1, 10, and 17 distinguish the invention over the cited art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under §103 are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the independent claims patentably define the present invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the reasons that the base claims from which they depend are allowable, and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and an early passage to issue of the present application are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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